

## Development of Ecological and Socioeconomic Targets For the Hood Canal Integrated Watershed Management Plan

19 July 2010

### Introduction

The purpose for the Hood Canal Integrated Watershed Management Plan (IWMP) is to provide a comprehensive, coordinated strategy for protecting and restoring the Hood Canal watershed. The IWMP is designed to address the Hood Canal Coordinating Council's (HCCC) strategic objectives as described in the HCCC Strategic Plan and to implement the Puget Sound Partnership's *Puget Sound Action Agenda* for the Hood Canal watershed. The strategic approach employed by the IWMP is the *Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation* method.<sup>1</sup>

Integral to this approach is defining the project scope, both geographically and thematically. A project's scope defines broad parameters related to what the project will affect. Efforts to conserve or effectively manage eco-regions, priority areas, or protected areas typically have a geographic scope or project area. Efforts to address specific targets, threats, opportunities, or enabling conditions have a thematic scope. In addition to defining the project scope it is necessary to articulate a clear and common vision (vision statement) and a preliminary desired state or ultimate condition of where we want to be (desired future conditions). The preliminary desired future conditions will be refined and quantified through this planning framework and will be the basis for setting shared targets and goals.

For the IWMP:

### **Project Scope**

The project scope for the Integrated Watershed Management Plan includes the environmental and socioeconomic systems that make up the Hood Canal watershed through Point Wilson. It is understood that this geographic scope may include additional areas that need to be considered to conserve the full range of desired future conditions. These environmental and socioeconomic systems are inextricably linked; thus our approach is to create a roadmap that helps maintain ecosystems in healthy, productive and resilient conditions to continue providing the ecosystem services humans want and need.

### **Vision Statement**

Humans benefit from and coexist sustainably with a healthy Hood Canal.

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<sup>1</sup> see *Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation*, version 2.0 October 2007 as developed by the Conservation Measures Partnership (CMP).

<b>Preliminary Desired Future Conditions</b>
<b>Human Health</b>
Human health is improved, not diminished, by Hood Canal's air, land and water quality. Fresh and marine waters are safe for human use, including fish and shellfish consumption.
<b>Human Wellbeing</b>
Humans benefit from and coexist sustainably with the natural environment. Modest population increases are planned and managed within urban areas and, to a limited extent, in rural areas. Economic development continues sustainably so that residents and visitors alike can enjoy access to commercial and other services within local communities and transportation needs are limited. Employment opportunities and infrastructure exist to provide family wage jobs for present and future generations. Cultural traditions and resources are respected and preserved. Recreation and resource-related industries continue in a sustainable manner and provide a primary source of employment.
<b>Species and Food Web</b>
Commercial and game species of fish, shellfish and wildlife exist in harvestable numbers, and coexist with abundant populations of nongame species. Abundant populations of forage fish provide adequate food supplies for dependent species. There are no listed species, and currently listed species are recovered, not extirpated. The genetic and species diversity of Hood Canal's ecosystem is protected and enhanced, retaining its complexity and resiliency.
<b>Habitats</b>
The watershed provides a diverse array of highly functional freshwater, marine and terrestrial habitats that will sustain the desired biological abundance and diversity while allowing resilience and adaptation to disturbances such as climate change.
<b>Water Quantity</b>
Water quantity and water uses are sustainably and equitably managed as a resource for humans and the natural environment. Natural hydrologic patterns have been restored and maintained in a normative condition. Water is viewed as a resource.
<b>Water Quality</b>
Fresh and marine waters support healthy populations of birds and marine mammals, fish and shellfish. There are no listed water bodies, and currently listed water bodies are recovered. Water quality is managed as a resource that supports human health and well-being and the natural environment.

## **Description of Targets**

The HCCC's overarching goal for the Hood Canal Integrated Watershed Management Plan is to achieve our shared vision and desired future conditions for the Hood Canal watershed as defined in the IWMP and as indicated by the selected targets. Targets are the basis for setting goals, carrying out actions, and measuring effectiveness. Targets are the ecological and socioeconomic items of interest that represent and encompass the full suite of diversity identified in the project scope and vision statement.

Ecological targets are specific species, ecological systems/habitats, or ecological processes such as shellfish, freshwater wetlands, or hydrology, respectively. Socioeconomic targets are human and economic values such as community wellbeing and quality of life. A complete suite of targets (8 to 16) will ensure that the entire scope of the vision statement will be attained.

# FINAL

The IWMP watershed inventory and public involvement planning process will identify and compile the suite of draft targets already being conserved by the people, plans, policies, and programs already working in Hood Canal, and will form the basis for further refining priority targets. The selection of targets is the first stage of prioritization in the proposed strategic planning framework. Specific attention should be paid to documenting why these targets were chosen to both ensure transparency and to document assumptions made in determining targets are comprehensive and appropriate. Descriptions of the priority targets will also highlight additional sub-targets that are captured by protection and restoration of the focal targets.

Once draft targets are finalized (as described below), their health or status is evaluated through a viability assessment. This assessment identifies critical attributes of the target that are necessary for function and persistence. The desired future status of these attributes (measured through their indicators) is detailed as a formal goal statement. A good goal details the desired future status of the target and is linked to targets, impact oriented, measurable, time limited and specific.

## **Criteria for Target Selection**

Selection of targets should be based on explicit criteria to ensure adequacy, appropriateness, and widespread consensus and understanding. The project teams, stakeholders and the general public will propose and evaluate each potential target using the following criteria:

- **Comprehensive and encompassing of the vision**

The sum of the targets selected should be broad enough to represent the whole set of environmental and socioeconomic systems described by the project scope, vision, and preliminary desired future conditions.

- **Consensus of, connection to and understanding by the general public**

The environmental health of Hood Canal cannot be maintained without awareness and expanded stewardship of the residents of, and visitors to, the watershed. Targets are the basis for setting goals for environmental and socioeconomic health and thus the general public must support and understand what each target represents, why it is important and how it will affect them.

- **Environmentally and/or socioeconomically important**

The targets must be capable of telling a story of general importance about major environmental and/or socioeconomic values, otherwise they will not support future actions in the face of more competitive values.

- **Ability to be influenced positively or negatively by humans**

Targets must be relevant to our local and regional actions.

- **Confidence in the data**

A target capable of commanding broad attention must be based on data that are accurate and, equally important, perceived to be accurate. It is difficult to gather broad support for the use of a target that depends on the collection of indicators requiring highly technical knowledge.

- **Compatibility**

IWMP targets must be compatible with targets being managed for at local, regional, and state scales.

# FINAL

## **Process for Target Selection**

The watershed inventory will inform the development of a list of targets based on past or on-going efforts as the starting point for considering priority IWMP targets.

We anticipate parallel tracks proceeding concurrently during 2010 to seek understanding of the broad community's priorities for focusing the efforts of the IWMP. First and foremost, the HCCC outreach and education teams, as guided by the Public and Technical Involvement Strategy, will begin to explore and focus the vision and preliminary desired future conditions based on input from members of the general public and various service organizations. These forums will seek to ascertain what different communities in Hood Canal would like to see as Hood Canal's highest priority ecological and socioeconomic targets. This information will be compiled and fed back into the target development process.

In addition, we anticipate a formal workshop approach for implementation groups in late 2010 that will fully review the strategic planning framework process, how targets are used in that process, inventory results with regard to existing targets, and a thorough vetting of the draft list of potential targets developed to date. This process will result in additional input for a recommended set of priority targets for the IWMP.

Further details of these two processes can be found in the HCCC's *Public and Technical Involvement Strategy for the Integrated Watershed Management Plan*.

Input from these parallel tracks will be compiled and presented to the IWMP steering committee and HCCC Board periodically in 2010 for selection of final targets in January 2011 to move forward into the viability analysis and goal-setting process.

## **Integrated Watershed Management Plan Draft Targets**

THIS IS A PLACEHOLDER FOR DRAFT LIST OF TARGETS